

Please delete the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 21, and replace with the following.

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--Specifically, in the cases of the three main existing methods for manufacturing aluminum nitride powders, there are the following problems, that are (1) the particle size is satisfactory but the desired shape and productivity cannot be obtained in the case of the direct nitridation method, (2) the degree of spherical shape is satisfactory but the desired particle size, purity, and productivity cannot be sufficient in the case of the reduction nitridation method, and (3) the desired particle size cannot be obtained in the case of conventional vapor phase synthesis methods, which indicate that, at the current point in time, it is impossible to satisfy both particle size and shape requirements.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

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--1. (Amended) A flame synthesized aluminum nitride filler-powder comprising elements Al, O and N, or elements Al and N, while not containing any other elements selected from an alkali metal, wherein the particle size of the powder is from 0.001 to 500 μm , the mean particle size thereof is from 0.1 to 100 μm , the external shape of the particles is spherical, and the powder is manufactured continuously, not in a batch type production, by using as a raw material powder consisting of element Al, or a mixture of a powder consisting of elements Al and O and a powder consisting of element C in a gas phase in the presence of a flame.

3. (Amended) The powder according to claim 1, wherein the raw material is a powder consisting of element Al whose particle size is from 0.01 to 500 μm , and a nitridation reaction is proceeded by using a flame in the presence of nitrogen, ammonia or an inert gas.

4. (Amended) The powder according to claim 1, wherein the raw material is a mixture of a powder consisting of elements Al and O and a powder consisting of element C whose respective particle sizes are from 0.001 to 500 μm , and a nitridation reaction is proceeded by using a flame in the presence of nitrogen, ammonia or an inert gas.

5. (Amended) A powder prepared by
subjecting the powder according to Claim 1 to a heat treatment either continuously or intermittently in a temperature range of from 500 to 10,000°C in the presence of air, nitrogen, ammonia or an inert gas, or in a vacuum state, by using a flame or an apparatus that is capable of applying a high temperature to the powder.

7. (Amended) A raw-material powder consisting of the powder according to Claim 1 comprising elements Al, O and N or a powder comprising elements Al and N, wherein the powder is used as a raw-material powder in a composite material system in which a powder comprising of inorganic materials is to be filled in a resin type raw material comprising of organic materials.--

Please add the following claims.

--10. (New) A powder prepared by

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subjecting the powder according to Claim 2 to a heat treatment either continuously or intermittently in a temperature range of from 500 to 10,000°C in the presence of air, nitrogen, ammonia or an inert gas, or in a vacuum state, by using a flame or an apparatus that is capable of applying a high temperature to the powder.

11. (New) A raw-material powder consisting of the powder according to Claim 10 comprising elements Al, O and N or a powder comprising elements Al and N, wherein the powder is used as a raw-material powder in a composite material system in which a powder comprising inorganic materials is to be filled in a resin type raw material comprising organic materials.

12. (New) A raw-material powder consisting of the powder according to Claim 2 comprising elements Al, O and N or a powder comprising elements Al and N, wherein the powder is used as a raw-material powder in a composite material system in which a powder comprising inorganic materials is to be filled in a resin type raw material comprising organic materials.

13. (New) A powder prepared by
subjecting the powder according to Claim 3 to a heat treatment either continuously or intermittently in a temperature range of from 500 to 10,000°C in the presence of air, nitrogen, ammonia or an inert gas, or in a vacuum state, by using a flame or an apparatus that is capable of applying a high temperature to the powder.

14. (New) A raw-material powder consisting of the powder according to Claim 13 comprising elements Al, O and N or a powder comprising elements Al and N, wherein the powder is used as a raw-material powder in a composite material system in which a powder comprising inorganic materials is to be filled in a resin type raw material comprising organic materials.

15. (New) A raw-material powder consisting of the powder according to Claim 3 comprising elements Al, O and N or a powder comprising elements Al and N, wherein the powder is used as a raw-material powder in a composite material system in which a powder comprising inorganic materials is to be filled in a resin type raw material comprising organic materials.

16. (New) A powder prepared by
subjecting the powder according to Claim 4 to a heat treatment either continuously or intermittently in a temperature range of from 500 to 10,000°C in the presence of air, nitrogen, ammonia or an inert gas, or in a vacuum state, by using a flame or an apparatus that is capable of applying a high temperature to the powder.

17. (New) A raw-material powder consisting of the powder according to Claim 16 comprising elements Al, O and N or a powder comprising elements Al and N, wherein the powder is used as a raw-material powder in a composite material system in which a powder comprising inorganic materials is to be filled in a resin type raw material comprising organic materials.

18. (New) A raw-material powder consisting of the powder according to Claim 4 comprising elements Al, O and N or a powder comprising elements Al and N, wherein the powder is used as a raw-material powder in a composite material system in which a powder comprising inorganic materials is to be filled in a resin type raw material comprising organic materials.

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19. (New) A raw-material powder consisting of the powder according to Claim 5 comprising elements Al, O and N or a powder comprising elements Al and N, wherein the powder is used as a raw-material powder in a composite material system in which a powder comprising inorganic materials is to be filled in a resin type raw material comprising organic materials.

20. (New) An aluminum nitride filler-powder, consisting of elements Al, O and N, or consisting of elements Al and N, wherein the particle size of the powder is from 0.001 to 500 μm , the mean particle size thereof is from 0.1 to 100 μm , and the external shape of the particles is spherical.--

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

The specification is amended to further specify the description of the related art. The claims have been amended to be placed in proper form and to remove multiple dependency. Further, the amendment to Claim 1 is believed to be supported throughout the specification and in the original claims. Support for new Claims 10-19 is found in original Claims 5 and 7. No new matter is believed to be introduced by the above amendment.